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Office of Legislative Counsel

OLC 78-0533

67 FEB 1973

Honorable Les Aspin, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Oversight  
Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

In light of the interest of the Subcommittee on Oversight in the issue of CIA relations with the media, I want to forward the enclosed Agency study of the Soviet propaganda campaign against United States production of a neutron bomb. A long-range objective of this campaign was the creation of a public opinion climate which will give the Soviets a favorable edge in SALT and CSCE negotiations.

This operation made use of every kind of printed and electronic medium, and was supported by a variety of front organizations, with their own means of influencing opinion. This use of the controlled news media stimulated reaction in the uncontrolled and neutral media. The study demonstrates the great resources of the Soviet Union in this field, and the ease with which they can advance their own interests and damage those of the U.S.

Sincerely,

[Redacted Signature]  
Acting Legislative Counsel

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Enclosure

Distribution:

Original Addressee w/encl.

- ① - OLC Subject w/encl.
- 1 - OLC Chrono w/o encl.
- 1 - SA/DO/O w/encl.

OLC: [Redacted] (6 Feb 73)

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2 September 1977

**SOVIET PROPAGANDA: THE NEUTRON BOMB**

**SUMMARY:** The Soviet Union during July and August 1977 mounted a worldwide campaign against U.S. production of the neutron bomb. The Soviets pursued this issue in every media channel and wherever it was possible to stimulate adverse public discussion. These efforts were directed toward pressuring the U.S. to back away from producing the bomb as well as accumulating political capital for Soviet use at future SALT and CSCE talks. As the campaign peaked at the end of August, it was apparent that the Soviet Union maintains an impressive capability to promote international propaganda on issues it considers important.

**BACKGROUND**

1. In early July 1977, [redacted] the Soviet Union was preparing a major propaganda campaign against the United States. The attack was to focus on four themes: the neutron bomb, obstruction of the Geneva Conference, support of Israel and a self-serving policy toward South Africa.

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**DATA BASE**

3. Headquarters queried [redacted] Field Stations regarding the appearance of the above themes in local media. Replies were received from [redacted] Stations. Also factored into the results were Department of State telegrams from 19 Posts and incidental reporting by FBIS and USIA.

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The data so overwhelmingly centered on the neutron bomb issue that the analysis was confined to this subject.

ANALYSIS

5. The information in this study points to a massive, well-planned propaganda operation by the Soviets with both short and long-range objectives.

[REDACTED]

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What follows is a characterization of the major aspects of the Soviet campaign against the United States and the neutron bomb.

6. Initiative From Moscow. FBIS statistics in the weekly "Trends in Communist Media" suggest that the earliest sustained propaganda on the neutron bomb came from Moscow and that the Soviets escalated this attack in later weeks to support the propaganda campaign as it got underway elsewhere. Of the 3000+ items of Soviet commentary noted each week by FBIS, the amount devoted to the neutron bomb issue rose from insignificant during 4-10 July, to dominate Soviet commentary during the three weeks of 25 July to 14 August. The attention given the neutron bomb then began to fade.

<u>Period</u>	<u>Total Items</u>	<u>Neutron Bomb Issue</u>
4-10 July	3,247	--
11-17 July	3,123	2%
18-24 July	3,163	5%
25-31 July	3,118	13%
1-7 August	3,091	13%
8-14 August	3,445	11%
15-21 August	3,331	5%

No other topic during the 25 July to 14 August period received so much attention. The campaign was sustained not only by volume but with spaced, dramatic events. On 30 July, TASS for the first time since December 1974 issued a statement on U.S. foreign policy,

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denouncing the neutron bomb. During the week of 1-7 August, significant attention was directed toward support of the "Week of Action" organized for 6-13 August by the World Peace Council front group. To keep up steam, Pravda on 9 August published an appeal by 28 communist parties against production of the neutron bomb. [redacted] noted that the neutron bomb was the prime Soviet propaganda target.

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#### 7. Echoes in Eastern Europe. [redacted]

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[redacted] the neutron bomb campaign there, which took off in the latter weeks of July, was massive, well-organized and faithfully mirrored the Soviet effort. The campaign employed all channels of public communication: press, radio, television, petitions, public letter writing and demonstrations. Some comments:

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This East European cacophony is seen as the second step in a campaign to develop worldwide censure of the neutron bomb in general and to stimulate adverse comment in Western Europe in particular.

8. Front Group Action. In pronouncing an international "Week of Action" during 6-13 August, the communist-dominated World Peace Council established a focal point for action against the neutron bomb. The Soviets' own Peace Committee used the occasion to pass a resolution stating the development of the neutron bomb violates the Helsinki CSCE agreement and threatens SALT negotiations. Others followed:

- Peace Councils in various East European states held protest meetings and passed resolutions.
- in Istanbul, a Peace Committee demonstrated in front of the U.S. Consulate General.

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- in Stuttgart, Frankfurt and Dusseldorf, front groups delivered notes to the Consulates General. In Bonn, two Soviet journalists were observed at a demonstration at the American Embassy.
- a front group in Lima, Peru, sent a protest to the United Nations.
- in Tanzania, a WPC delegation sought propaganda assistance from President Nyerere.
- other major international front groups such as the International Institute for Peace and the World Federation of Trade Unions participated in the "Week of Action."

The purpose of the front group activity was to keep protest momentum going and to draw non-communists into the campaign, particularly in Western Europe. To the extent that this could be accomplished, what had begun as largely a Soviet effort could now appear as a general public reaction to the horrors of the neutron bomb.

9. Western Europe. There were two types of adverse public attention for the neutron bomb which the Soviets could hope to generate in Western Europe and in fact did. The first might be called "hack comment" and came from front groups and publications of communist parties.

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The second type of comment, and the far more important, was that of the non-communist press situated politically in the center or on the left. A segment of this press could be counted on to salivate editorially almost on command once the neutron bomb received such enormous attention in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Others in this group could be expected to react negatively to the bomb issue for various reasons: anti-Americanism, doubts on NATO's viability, hopes of maintaining a special status with the Soviet Union, or an honest dislike of the neutron bomb.

10. For the Soviets, the real propaganda paydirt lay in editorial treatment given the neutron bomb by this second group, a performance judged by NATO Secretary General Luns in a 26 August speech as consisting of half-truths, untruths and ignorance. Given the emotional themes which were raised in the neutron bomb debate--saving buildings rather than people; the hypocrisy of Americans advocating human rights in face of the bomb production; the endangering of detente--it was an old-fashion editorial binge which many papers would not deny themselves. And beyond the non-communist, anti-bomb press,

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there was the essentially objective sector of the media which felt an obligation to carry both sides of the argument. For example, the "International Herald Tribune" of 23 August carried a signed article by Soviet Nobel Laureate Nikolai Semionov parroting the Soviet line. The IHT later carried a rebuttal by Congressman Robert Carr but the Soviets could care less. For use in editorial replay and broadcast journalism, the Semionov piece in IHT was priceless. Thus [redacted] reported it impossible to distinguish left from right on the bomb issue while [redacted] unconsciously made the point of the Soviet propaganda success by commenting that "in advanced countries" [redacted] "such themes as those cited...will appear in local media, totally independent of Soviet influence." As a Soviet propagandist might comment, "Right on, comrade!" ..

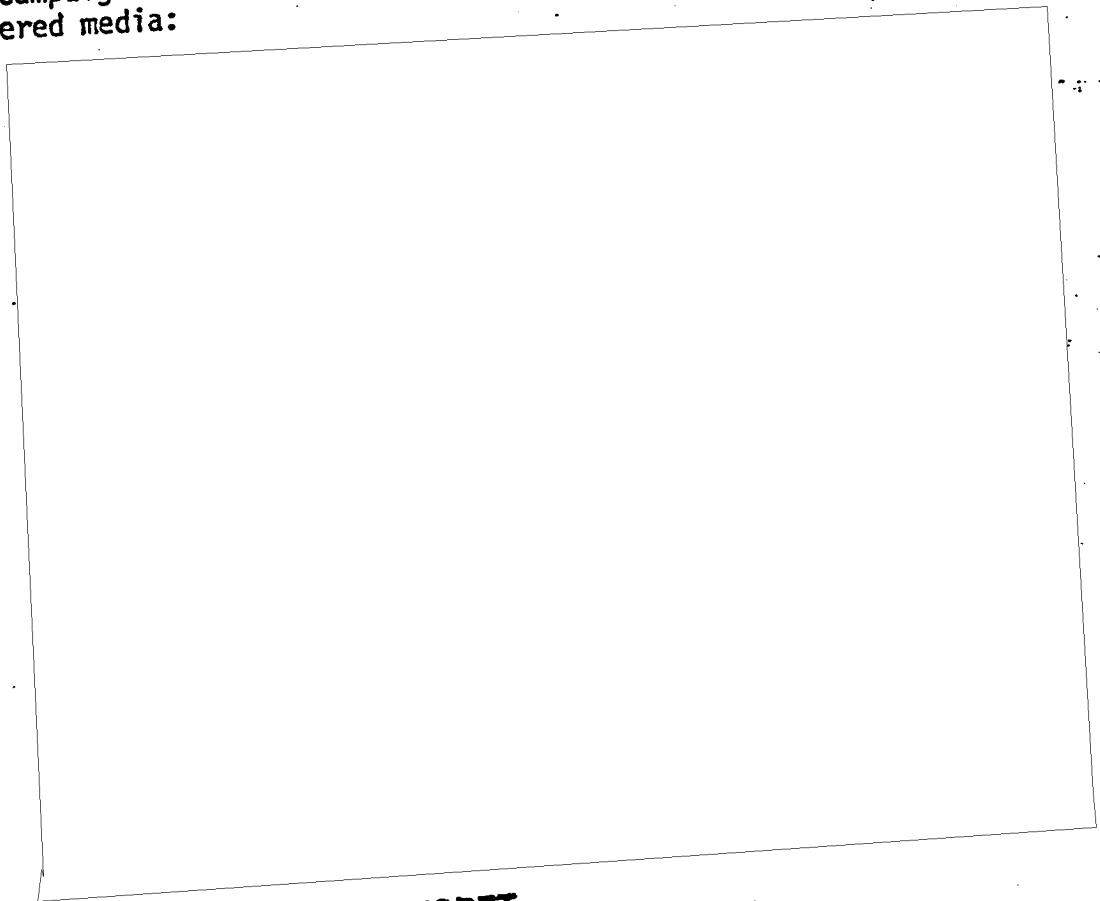
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11. Propaganda Elsewhere. If there were any doubts of the existence of a worldwide Soviet effort to stop development of the neutron bomb, it was confirmed by efforts of the Soviet delegation at the Pugwash meeting in Munich during the latter days of August. There the Soviets pursued one theme: the dangers of the neutron bomb and the consequent need for mobilizing world opinion and pressure against the U.S. This effort was perhaps the capstone to a campaign which saw the same propaganda line appear in far-scattered media:



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### CONCLUSIONS

12. Operational Mechanics. The volume of propaganda against the neutron bomb, the timing and programmed developments within that outburst, and the re-occurrence of identical themes suggest only one possibility: an intricate Soviet propaganda campaign involving heavy Moscow media play, an East European cacophony, international front group action, direct media placement where possible in non-communist areas and the stimulation in the West of critical media comment. In this, the Soviets were successful.

13. Soviet Objectives. The political objectives of the Soviet Union in this campaign are clear: stopping production of the neutron bomb and gaining room for maneuvering at SALT and CSCE talks. A State telegram from Berlin commented: "In the GDR the groundwork is clearly being laid to support whatever tactics the Soviet Union and its allies may choose to employ at Belgrade." A Sofia telegram quotes a Bulgarian official as placing the Soviet propaganda campaign squarely in the context of Soviet SALT maneuvering.

14. Study Objectives. At the time Field Stations were queried on neutron bomb propaganda, the extent of the Soviet effort was not apparent. One can see now the campaign was meant to be worldwide and intense from the outset. The campaign indicates the Soviets retain a sophisticated capability to mount propaganda operations. (A parallel effort against South African nuclear arms testing provides another indicator of this capability.)

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: [REDACTED]		DATE OF REQUEST	STAT
FROM [REDACTED]	7 FEB 1978	SUSPENSE DATE	STAT
SUBJECT:			
NOTES			
<p>Last fall we sent this report on the Soviet propaganda effort against the neutron bomb to the SSCI because of the concern of that Committee [REDACTED] No copy was sent to HPSCI. Because of the interest in the Aspin Subcommittee, I recommend you sign this letter forwarding this same report to Aspin. I believe it helps our cause to demonstrate the media capability of the Soviets.</p> <p><i>delivered to CAROL 17 Feb 4:10.</i></p>			
COORDINATED WITH (list names as well as offices)			
NAME	Don Gregg	OFFICE	DATE 6 Feb 7STAT
NAME		OFFICE	DATE
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NAME		OFFICE	DATE
ACTION REQUIRED BY GLC			
Signature.			